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ABSTRACT

A study explored how various groups within school systems defined and identified change and institutionalization and how people viewed their own individual roles in district efforts to implement and institutionalize change. Three districts were selected based on similarities in organizational structure, instructional program offerings, student population, and history of attempted change. The superintendent and central administrators in charge of personnel, curriculum, and elementary and secondary instructional programs for each district were interviewed, along with two principals and two teachers from each district. Results suggest four implications: (1) school districts need to utilize the knowledge that personnel already have about their systems; (2) attention should be given to identify structural modifications and create awareness about these modifications; (3) how personnel come to a common perception of change should be investigated further; and (4) the roles of district personnel in change implementation suggest the neccessity to identify the readiness of those people for change. Appended are 61 references. (SI)

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# School District Personnel Speak Out on Change

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For many different reasons school districts throughout the country introduce and implement new educational programs within their systems. This introduction of new programs assumes that there is a need to do something differently, or better, with respect to a variety of educational goals. (Berman & McLaughlin, 1974; Sarason, 1982; Gross et al., 1971; Longo, 1983; Gaynor, 1977). It also assumes that the implemenation of change is possible in the existing structure of school systems and that there are people in those systems who can do the things necessary to implement change. Further, a school district's adoption and implementation of new programs may include the belief that changes made should last and become a part of the system. However, even though the implemention of innovations implies that change will occur, the change may amount only to a superficial rearrangement of existing policies and practices. In fact, a great deal of time, money, energy, and other resources may be allocated to planning and implementing new programs that eventually don't "stick".

Only recently has research begun to address the question of why some innovations survive and others do not (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978; Huberman & Miles, 1982; Huberman & Crandall, 1982; Miles & Louis, 1986; Yin, 1978). Among variables identified as important to change are the interrelationships among district personnel and the attention given to structural modifications of the system itself. The structural modifications include administrative commitment and support, staff development, adequate personnel and material resources, effective use of innovations (Berman & McLaughlin, 1974-78; Cox, 1983; Huberman & Miles, 1982) and attention to changes in organizational structure, rules, and procedures that stabilize and protect the innovation (Huberman & Miles, 1982;

Miles & Louis, 1986; Yin, 1978; Yin et al., 1978). The literature does not reflect any clear understanding of the interrelationships and perceptions of district personnel who must work together to implement long lasting change or of their awareness of the structural modifications which facilitate change.

The goals for any given innovation will never be fully realized unless the innovation becomes fully operative in the system (Gross et al., 1971; Loucks, 1983). This implies that if the district as a whole does not supply what a new program needs in order to function (materials, retraining, resources, for example), the effectiveness of the innovation itself cannot be judged. "There is no clear way for accurate judgements to be made about the effects of an innovation unless accurate information is available about the extent to which the innovation has actually been implemented" (Gaynor, 1977). Basically, therefore, change is dependent on whether a new program is adequately implemented or not. In part, that is dependent upon whether district personnel have made the necessary adjustments to the system to allow the innovation to be operable.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore how various groups within school systems defined and identified change and institutionalization and how people viewed their own individual roles in district efforts to implement and institutionalize change. Huberman and Crandall (1982) call innovations "highly perishable goods" that need attention, and state that their institutionalization cannot be taken for granted. What specific actions should be taken by those involved in planning and implementing program changes in

order to institutionalize the elements of an innovation throughout a school district? The study was also interested in how district personnel perceptions related to research on what it takes to implement change effectively.

## Methodology

### Selecting the Topic

The research topic reflects the researcher's preliminary observations during the planning and implementation of an innovative program in a large, urban school district. Among central administrators, principals, and teachers, questions arose frequently about the perceived role of each participant in the implementation of the district wide program. It was unclear who had primary responsibility for initiating and making changes in each department, and what exactly those changes should be. Some central department administrators, teachers, and principals seemed to feel that responsibility for implementing the program fell exclusively on people assigned to the new program. From the new program manager's perspective, however, other departments had specific responsibility for implementing parts of the program. For example, it might be assumed that the personnel department would staff the new program. However, some individuals in personnel questioned the extent of their department's responsibility. They wanted to cooperate, but the responsibilities had to be sorted out. Misunderstandings were created by assumptions and expectations personnel in various departments had of one another. Territoriality regarding adjustments in a department's procedures caused people to feel that the needs and demands of the new program were an intrusion on their "real" work.

Selecting Respondents for the Study

The variables identified by the literature as leading to change and institutionalization in school systems are internal to the organization of the school district (Miles & Louis, 1986). Studies indicate that the key areas of district operations are: budget management, personnel, curriculum, and instructional program (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978). Although much research on educational innovations has focused on the actions of teachers and principals at the building level, central administrators also play a key role in the institutionalization of programs. They not only have the capacity to inhibit change but also to facilitate it (Cox, 1983; House, 1974; Huberman, 1983; Miles, 1983). Therefore, the superintendent and central administrators in charge of personnel, curriculum, and elementary and secondary instructional programs for each district were selected to be interviewed, together with two principals and two teachers from each district. The researcher also interviewed directors of several new programs implemented in school districts in recent years.

Site Selection

Observations about personnel perceptions in one school district raised the initial questions for this study. In order to determine whether similar phenomena occured in other large school systems, a comparative study was proposed. School districts with similar structural, programmatic, and demograhpic features in four other large cities located in different geographic regions of the country were investigated and considered for comparison. After visiting the prospective sites and talking with community and school district

personnel from each of those cities, three districts were selected. Final selection was based on similarities in organizational structure, instructional program offerings, student population, and history of attempted change.

The three large, urban school districts involved in the study were located in the Midwest, Southwest, and West Coast regions of the country. Student populations in the districts ranged from 50,000 to 90,000 students. All three were comparable in their internal structure. That is, they each had departments responsible for instructional services, curriculum development, personnel, and building principals and teachers. Each also had programs for gifted and talented students, Chapter I programs, and bilingual programs. All three had received large amounts of federal funds and were under court order or community pressure to provide equal educational opportunities to all students. Some of their new programs were in response to court mandates. In each district there was a diverse racial and ethnic student population with significant numbers of minority children. This population ranged from 50 percent to 87 percent of the total population.

## Data Collection

### Background Information

Background information on each district was collected from a variety of sources and a description was developed for each district. This included demographic features of the communities, organizational charts, and histories of innovation in districts.

On-site Interviews

Although much of the research on change and institutionalization in school districts in school districts is done from an outside perspective looking for district variables that are important to these processes, the present study focused on determining what school district personnel themselves thought was important in change and institutionalization. The interview protocol, therefore, could not suggest identified variables to the respondents. Consequently, the questions related to the broad general topics of change, institutionalization and the respondent's involvement in district change.

A preliminary set of questions was developed and submitted to a panel of educators for suggestions on wording that would clarify the intent of each question. This preliminary interview protocol was then field tested to determine the worth and usefulness of the questions. These interviews were followed by in-depth discussions for feedback with each respondent.

Individual on-site interviews with study respondents were then conducted by the researcher. The interviews were audio-taped and followed a semi-structured protocol designed to guide the respondents in thinking through their general concept of change in school systems, their ideas of long lasting or permanent change and institutionalization, and their own involvement in change and institutionalization school systems. Other questions asked what each department needed from other departments in order to bring about district wide change. Respondents were asked first to reflect upon the broad general conceptualizations of change, then to narrow their focus to their personal involvement. The average interview time was one hour and fifteen minutes.

Field notes and observations were also made to determine the structure and interrelationships in each district and how people were involved in change efforts. The environment and atmosphere of the work places were noted during the interviews, as well as during time spent observing and visiting districts.

## Data Analysis

The analysis of the data was descriptive and qualitative. It involved sorting raw data into themes and identifying and interpreting resultant categories. Information gained from the interviews initially fell into three main areas: a) perceptions of change in school systems, b) perceptions of institutionalization, and c) perceptions of the interrelationships between various departments. In the areas of change and institutionalization, categories included people's definitions of these processes and examples from their experiences in the school district. The interrelationships categories described departmental involvement in change efforts. A computer program called The Ethnograph was used to sort and organize data after the categories were decided upon. A summary of the perceptions of personnel within each district was made and a description of the district's approach to change and institutionalization was formulated. Perceptions of people in various categories within the particular district were compared.

Data were also compared for similarities and differences within each role category across districts. For example, how were all curriculum supervisors alike? Did all teachers in all the districts think about change in the same way?

## Summary of Findings

The following summarizes a selected set of results which addresses first, the respondents' perceptions of change and institutionalization and second, perceptions of roles of various personnel categories. The three urban school systems in the study were code named Crystal City, Maple City, and Baker City School Districts. The findings of this study were consistent with the literature which illustrates the complexity of the change process in school districts. Change involves not only the initiation and implementation of innovations, but very complex interrelationships among district personnel (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978; Huberman & Miles, 1982; Huberman & Crandall, 1982; Miles & Louis, 1986).

### 1. Perceptions of Change and Institutionalization

Respondents' attitudes and definitions of change were not common across the districts. Change was associated with efforts to improve existing practices in two of the districts, Crystal City and Maple City. There, it was acknowledged that the intent was to improve educational opportunities, even though respondents in Maple City did not always think that improvement had actually taken place when innovations were implemented. In Baker City respondents were skeptical about the real purposes of change programs in their district. These changes were regarded by teachers more as efforts to appear busy in order to impress the Board of Education or the community than real efforts to improve conditions.

Respondents across the districts generally defined institutionalization as the entrenchment of a change into the existing structure. They agreed that

institutionalization occurred when all district personnel accepted a change as the normal course of activity and expected its continuation.

Process for Change

Each district was found to have a discernible character in its implementation of change, a "personality" of its own. The character of each district's concept of, and approach to, change implementation was portrayed by a composite of the perceptions of change held by respondents.

In Crystal City, the district's approach was clearly and commonly perceived by all respondents. They described approaches or procedures for implementation that were perceived as the "district's way" of implementing change. In Maple City respondents generally defined change in the school system similarly, but they did not define the implementation procedures in the same way. Their perceptions of how district wide change occurred did not have the same clarity and uniformity demonstrated by the Crystal City personnel. In the third district, Baker City, respondents had an even more confused picture of district wide change. There was a great disparity in the perceptions and descriptions of any particular change effort and there were no commonly perceived processes or procedures for implementing change in this district.

Even though Crystal City had a greater variety of types of schools and programs than the other two districts, the sense of district coordination was greater here than in the others. Respondents described their own roles, and those of their department and other departments, in a way that indicated they not only knew what they had to do in relation to the general implementation of innovations, but that they were also aware of what others were doing.

Crystal City was also the only district where the central administration was perceived as coming close to fulfilling its role as the support system for the school buildings. Principals seemed to rely on central support for the resources to implement the innovations to which they had committed themselves. Teachers also felt that if the district wanted the change "to go", it would provide the necessary resources and make the necessary operational accommodations. This was true even if teachers didn't agree with the choice of adopted innovations. In the other two districts respondents seemed constantly frustrated believing that they did not get what they needed to implement changes.

Research on the history of change in each district indicated that Crystal City had acquired a national reputation for effectively implementing a variety of innovations such as magnet specialty schools, effective schools designed to raise minority student test scores, and innovative health curriculum. All respondents in that district indicated an awareness of this reputation in their comments.

Commitment and Ownership of Change

The perceptions held by building personnel about who had made the commitment to implement change also differed across the districts. In Crystal City building personnel had a sense of committing themselves (by voting on a district proposed change, for example) and there seemed to be some choice about assignments to participate in innovations in the different schools. This sense of conscious involvement may have contributed to the respondents' more coherent and uniform perceptions about change.

Respondents in the other two districts, however, credited their central administration for initiating change and seemed to rely on them to implement it. They were generally unclear about the role they themselves were to play or what others were doing with regard to the implementation of these changes.

Although the "buy in" of building personnel indicated by the literature as so necessary to the effective implementation of change was generally lacking in these two districts, there were two notable exceptions. In the implementation of Baker City's bilingual program, respondents clearly described their own involvement and that of others. And, in Maple City there was an expression of hope that the ideas of building personnel would be heard by the new superintendent. This new superintendent's current efforts to involve building level staff in identifying and addressing needs were perceived as a possible beginning of district level communication necessary for a coordinated change effort.

Types of Change

When asked to give examples of changes that had taken place in their districts, people identified changes that dealt specifically with their department or area of the system. Teachers and principals tended to identify specific changes in curriculum, changes in the climate and composition of schools, and attitudes toward students. They identified things like the effective schools plans, specialty magnet schools, and new or revised curriculum. Central administrators identified organizational changes like the reorganization of central administration and site based management.

Changes identified by respondents from all three districts fell into four main types or categories: curricular, personnel, organizational, and mandated changes. Mandated changes were court ordered desegregation plans, including bilingual programs.

Focus of Change

The focus of change efforts was also different in the three districts. In Maple City, the mindset for most respondents seemed to be that something had to change in classrooms and buildings. In Baker City, the focus was also on the building level. Although the changes mentioned by respondents in these two districts could be seen as having district wide implications, the actual implementation of the change was limited and focused at the building or departmental level. Respondents' thinking centered on these two levels, not on how their district as a cohesive whole would implement the change. Only in Crystal City did respondents' answers also emphasize the districtwide aspect of change implementation. This district differed significantly because, even though its personnel were also interested in affecting school level change, school level innovations came about as a result of a district effort involving more than one building or one department. According to respondents in Crystal City, innovations were planned, organized, and evaluated by central administrators, including the superintendent, with involvement from principals and some representation from teachers. There were definite roles played by various departmental personnel and those roles were understood by all of the respondents in the district.

Changes Identified as Institutionalized

In terms of permanent change, the type of change effort that was most commonly identified as being institutionalized was the mandated change in school district operations ordered by the courts for integration. Busing for integration purposes was the only change consistently identified as having been institutionalized. In both districts where mandatory integration efforts such as busing and magnet schools were court ordered, respondents said that these two practices were institutionalized or becoming institutionalized. In one district, the court ordered bilingual program which was a part of the integration effort was also seen as something that was beginning to be institutionalized. Research on institutionalization indicates that one contributing factor to institutionalization is the acceptance of an innovation by personnel as a normal part of the system. This very perception, or thinking that changes were becoming institutionalized could help to actually make these mandated changes achieve institutionalization.

## 2. Perceptions of Role in the Process of Change

### Perceptions of the Superintendent Role

In all three districts the superintendent was perceived as crucial to the initiation of change. However, he was not always perceived as instrumental in planning how those changes would be implemented. In Crystal City, for example, the superintendent was perceived not only as the initiator of changes dictated by the needs of the community and the school system, but also as the guiding force behind their implementation. He was also seen as integral to the coordination of these efforts, from the initiation to the evaluation stage. The Crystal City superintendent also saw himself this way.

In Maple City, on the other hand, where the superintendent was also perceived as the initiator of the changes dictated by various community and school pressures, his role in their implementation was not perceived as clearly. Various respondents in departments throughout the district were not able to describe his plan.

Finally, the role of the superintendent in Baker City was the least clearly perceived. Although he was also seen as the initiator of most changes, he was not perceived to be involved in change implementation at all. The descriptions of how innovations were implemented in this district presented a picture of a superintendent who initiated a district wide change, such as site based management, then delegated its implementation to assistant superintendents. These assistant superintendents, heads of major departments, also independently initiated and implemented their own changes. No one, central, unifying force seemed evident.

Another important difference regarding the superintendents was their perceived motivation for initiating change. In the Crystal and Maple City districts, the superintendents were perceived as initiating changes that were dictated by external needs or pressures. Some examples were their plans to increase student achievement and to implement specialty magnet schools in response to community and court mandates. In Baker City, however, there was a perception that changes were not necessarily related to need or community demand, but rather introduced as a result of the superintendent's own beliefs about what school districts should be. For example, shortly after arriving in the district, the Baker City superintendent called his assistant superintendents together to plan for implementation of a school site management

plan. Respondents' perceptions were that that was purely motivated by the current literature on effective schools. His plan called for decentralization, and although they didn't dislike the idea, they pointed out that there had been no assessment of the current state of the district and its need for that.

While the superintendents in Crystal City Schools and Maple City schools both described some type of master plan for the implementation of district wide change indicating timelines, goals, and describing processes or procedures, the superintendent in Baker City Schools mentioned several times that it was inappropriate to have a master plan. His philosophy was that change evolved, given certain stimuli. He mentioned that there needed to be a "readinesss" on the part of participants. That is, he thought that people would "take hold of an innovation" when they were ready for it. He also talked about the need for a very "tight" system of monitoring both readiness and the actual implementation, but there was no evidence of such a system.

In each of the districts, the superintendent's leadership was seen as important, but respondents in Crystal City did not see change and institutionalization as totally dependent on the person of the superintendent. They credited the superintendent as the leader in change implementation, but they also described a process that stood alone, a process that they did not see as dependent on whoever happened to be superintendent at that time. This process had evolved over a long period of time and was probably instituted by the long term superintendent who had studied change implementation and prided himself on paying close attention to making the adaptations necessary for change. In the case of the introduction of site based management, for example, although the deputy superintendent was in charge of the implementation, the

change process described by respondents was the same as it had been for the implementation of the specialty magnet schools, when the superintendent himself had been in charge. The common perceptions held by all respondents in Crystal City contributed to a sense of manageability of change. There was a clear and common perception of what the superintendent wanted in terms of change.

Unlike Crystal City, Maple City personnel saw the person of the superintendent (in terms of personal commitment and knowledge) as critical to change implementation. Respondents seemed to feel that with a different superintendent, or a change in superintendents, there would be a difference in what, and how, changes would take place. They associated the changes occuring in the district with the new superintendent in a very specific, personal way. Respondents felt that he knew what he wanted in terms of change, but most could not articulate what that was.

In Baker City, change also seemed to be associated with the person of the new superintendent. However, there did not seem to be the same guarded optimism about his following through in supporting implementation that was evidenced in Maple City. This superintendent was not perceived to have a well defined vision of what he wanted regarding change. In these two districts the lack of a process and the dependence on the personalities of the individual superintendents seemed to contribute to an unstable, confused approach to change.

Perceptions of Central Administrators' Role

More than the superintendent, other central administrators played important roles in the implementation of change. These administrators were

perceived as more integrally involved in the implementation process. Their roles were perceived as providing support, resources, and services to school buildings as well as providing leadership for the acceptance of change. Some central administrators, like those in charge of instructional programs, curriculum, and program directors provided a combination of leadership and knowledge of nitty gritty adaptations to organizational rules and procedures. The only position that seemed almost exclusively relegated to dealing with structural modifications was that of personnel director. There were more comments describing structural modifications made by personnel directors than by anyone else. Although personnel directors did not surface as important in the planning of district change, they seemed to be aware of the many structural adaptations necessary to implementation. In Crystal City the personnel director seemed to consider the adaptations that accommodated change efforts as a part of his job. In the other districts personnel directors did not. Personnel directors generally were told what to do by other central administrators.

Perceptions of Principals' Role.

Principals seemed especially important in the implementation of change. Interviews seemed to indicate that they, along with some program directors, were the people most consciously involved in executing the plans for change implementation. They seemed to have a foot in each part of the district, one in central administration and the other in schools.

Although some building principals in Maple City schools also expressed frustration with the lack of resources from central administration, principals

in general did not seem to feel the same degree of alienation from central administration that teachers did.

Perceptions of Teachers' Role.

The greatest similarity in perceptions of change, institutionalization, and role relationships among district personnel was found in teachers' descriptions of district change efforts. Teachers in all three districts seemed to feel that they could operate independently from central administration. In two of the districts, Baker City Schools and Maple City schools, they seemed almost hostile to, or scornful of, central administration.

Teachers in particular gave the impression of being left out of any meaningful participation in the implementation of change at the district level. Even in Crystal City schools where teachers seemed to understand and support the identified district wide innovations, they complained that their input was not valued or that it was ignored. In the other two districts, teachers were very unclear about the district's intentions for innovations and how the districts were going about implementing them. At the same time they felt that they were expected to improve something. This is significant because respondents generally felt that the bottom line for change in the school district was at the classroom level. Teachers were acknowledged as the people who actually had the task of implementing change in the classroom and any change eventually had to impact the classroom.

Although individual teachers did not really perceive themselves as being an integral part of the change process, the teachers' unions emerged as important players in the implementation of district change. In fact, they

seemed to exert the only real power teachers had in influencing the direction of change. Although the study did not inquire about these teacher organizations, in all three districts (especially in Crystal and Baker City schools) they surfaced as an important factor, either impeding or enhancing change. In Crystal City the importance of involving the union was acknowledged at the outset by administrators. The union's power was recognized and it was included in the initial planning process of that district's changes. For example, steps were taken to anticipate problems connected with the negotiated contract for teachers. In contrast, in Baker City schools, the union was ignored and in the initiation of at least one major change effort, the union was able to abort the innovation. In this case, there had been a conflict between the negotiated teachers' agreement and the change proposed by top administrators. The administrator who initiated this innovation admitted that the conflict could have been avoided had the district involved the union in the initial planning phase and worked with them to amend the existing agreement.

Even though the teachers' unions did exert influence on the process, the teachers themselves did not seem to be aware that it played a major role as a promoter or inhibitor of change. The teachers' unions were identified by administrators as influencing implementation of change, not by teachers.

District Organizational Structure

The environment in which district personnel operated surfaced as a major factor in the descriptions of change and institutionalization. The structural organization of the school districts themselves greatly influenced the district's approach to implementing change.

At the beginning of the study, districts with seemingly comparable organizational structures were chosen so that comparisons could be made across the three districts. Although, on the surface the three districts appeared similar in organizational structure, as the interviews progressed it became evident that the actual make-up of each system was different enough to affect the way districts approached and eventually implemented change.

One difference was that job position titles, although similar, represented different functions in each district. For example, across districts, directors of curriculum had different roles. In the first district, Crystal City Schools, the curriculum director's purview was very specific to curriculum writing, planning, and supervision, as well as special programs like bilingual education, special education, and gifted/talented. In another district, Baker City Schools, the person with this same title was in charge of curriculum writing, planning, supervision, and areas such as staff development, testing and evaluation. Special programs did not fall under his direction, but rather under the elementary superintendent. The structure in Crystal City appeared to facilitate change implementation because there was a minimum of hierarchical structure. The curriculum writers and developers, and special program managers, were all in the same location physically as well as being comparable to each other in status so that cooperation was easier. In Baker City's configuration, the person in charge of curriculum was an assistant superintendent in charge of many areas. Within his department there was a hierarchy of positions which inhibited the cooperation of staff with equal status. They were also all physically separated so that opportunities for cooperation were diminished. The third district, Maple City, had a plan for

reorganization into clusters which had been in place less than a year and respondents felt it was in a state of flux.

Another apsect of school districts, the bureaucratic nature of large, urban school systems, also emerged as a factor affecting change. The extent of the bureaucratic character of the three districts differed. For example, the relative power and influence of various assistant superintendents and directors were different in each district. These power differentials impacted the implementation of change efforts. In Crystal and Maple city districts, the district superintendent was the focus of power and gave strong impetus to change efforts. In Baker City Schools, however, the assistant superintendents who made up the superintendent's cabinet seemed to have more power than in the other two districts. Here, power was diffused among these assistant superintendents who were in charge of various departments and who separately seemed to provide the primary leadership for personnel in those departments. Therefore, each department operated like a "mini-district". During the implementation of change, cooperation between the heads of the various departments in this district seemed almost forced. Respondents did not describe this as a willful lack of cooperation however. Rather, their perceptions were that each department head was totally in charge of his/her own operations and decisions regarding change were often made only within their departments, not district wide.

## Conclusions

These results suggest four implications for district level practice. First, school districts need to utilize the knowledge that personnel already

have about their systems' operations in order to more effectively produce change. School district personnel know what is important to do in the daily performance of the district's work. People who have worked within a school system know from their own perspectives what it takes to "get things done" in the routine discharge of their duties. They usually know what needs to happen in their own departments in order to accomplish the district's goals system wide. They also know what they need from other departments to enable them to accomplish their functions. Findings suggest that this knowledge of the "working of the system" was not utilized by respondents in two districts. These respondents did not focus on the implications of a proposed change either for them personally or for their departments. How can individuals relate this everyday knowledge to what they have to do in district wide implementation of change?

Second, attention should be given to identifying the structural modifications necessary for change and institutionalization in districts and to creating awareness of these modifications within departments. Results indicated that there was some awareness in one district of structural modifications and very little awareness in the other two districts. The reputation for effective change was positively related to the greater awareness level. The data suggests that there should be more research across districts to investigate this relationship.

Third, further investigation into how personnel come to a common perception and understanding of change would assist districts in achieving a common sense of working toward a district change effort. In the district where personnel held common perceptions about a change process and roles were more

clearly articulated, change seemed to occur more easily and personnel felt that change was manageable. The fact that at least one district had personnel who perceived implementation along the same lines and understood their part in it suggests that it is possible to communicate internally within a district in order to come to a common understanding.

Fourth, the key roles of district personnel in change implementation suggest the necessity of identifying the readiness of those key people for change and of monitoring perceptions and actions throughout the implementation of change. If actors are important to the implementation process, they need to be aware of the district's expectation that change is supposed to be taking place and aware of their roles in it in order to maximize their participation.

It is apparent that a combination of factors, albeit dynamic and unpredictable is necessary for enhancing chances of achieving change and institutionalization in school districts. Further, change processes always involve more than one part of a system and, in each part people have their own perceptions about what happens in the process. These perceptions are important because people will act according to what they think is important to do (Broom & Selznick, 1958; Biklen & Bodgan, 1982). They will act according to the demands of their role as they see them. Things that are important to the process of change may remain undone and time may be wasted working on things that are not critical to institutionalizing the change. Thus, the chances of effecting lasting change are lessened.

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